

20th Century American Novel II

J. D. Salinger and Post-War Society

Post-War Society and Culture (1945-1960)

- WWI: 1914-1918
- 1929: Wall Street Crash – The Great Depression Era
- 1939: Germany invades Poland. WWII starts.
- Pearl Harbor: December 7, 1941
- “Use it up, wear it out, make do or do without”

-
- Population of US before WWII: around 130 m.
 - 1940: 9 m unemployed
 - 1943: less than 1 m unemployed
 - 15-16 m men served in WWII (around 25% of men)
 - June 1944: D-Day
 - August 1945: Hiroshima and Nagasaki
 - Around 400.000 men died (and many more injured)

-
- During the war 6 m women entered the workforce
 - 1945: 24% of women in workforce

Cold War and Atomic Age

- U.S.A. fears two things: communism and nuclear weapons
- 1947: The Truman Doctrine
- 1950-1953: Korean War (35.000 – 55.000 U.S. soldiers died)
- 1953: Julius and Ethel Rosenberg executed
- Senator Joseph McCarthy and the House of Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)
- 1957: Sputnik I

The Great American Boom

- 1950 – 1960: 30 m new homes built
- Cars
- More leisure time
- TV
- Advertisement
- Growth in everything
- Baby boom (25% in few years)

Everything seems to go great... but what about women?

- 1950: 60% of women aged 18-24 were married
- Social pressure + the problem that has no name = pills
- Is this all?

What about men?

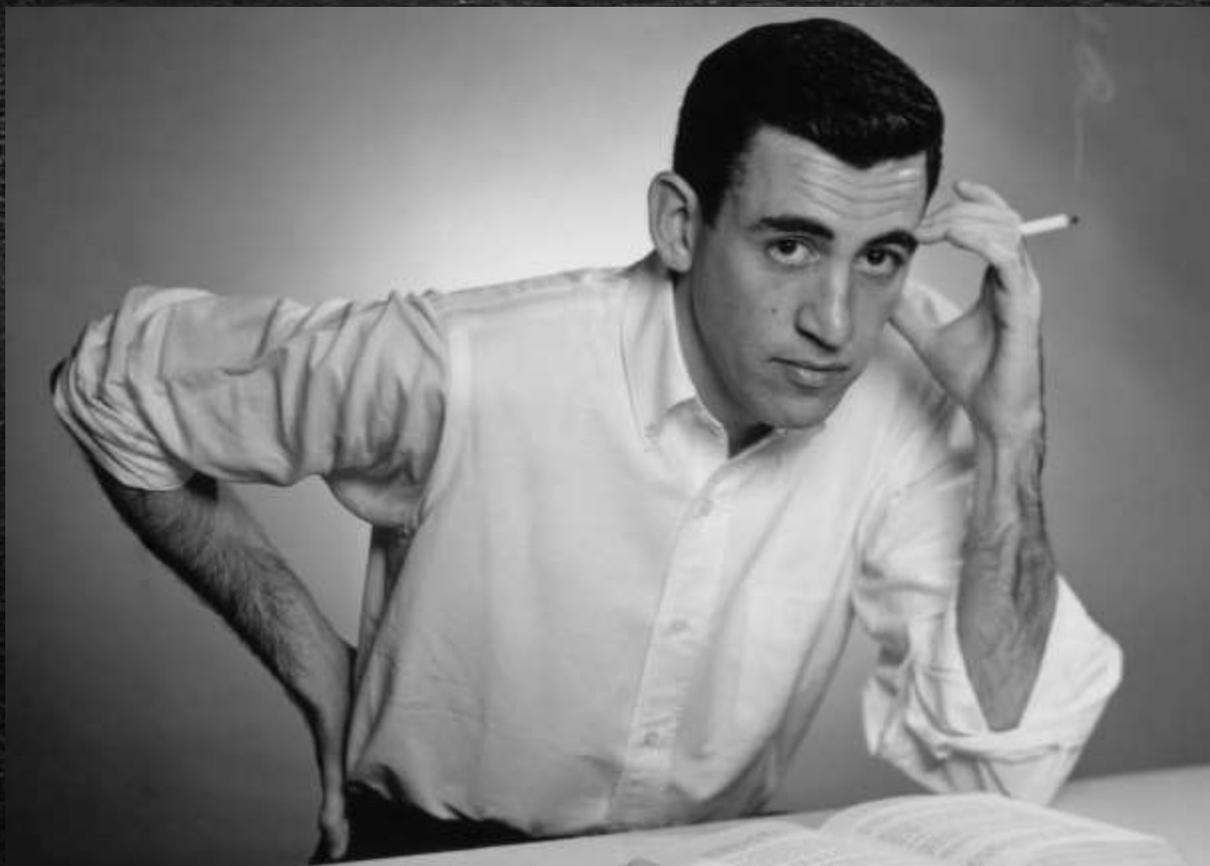
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Rat race
- “Keeping up with the Joneses”

What about adolescents?

- Peer culture
- Generation gap
- Consumerism
- Rock n' Roll, James Dean, Marlon Brando...
- And...
- *The Catcher in the Rye*

Conformity and counter-culture

J. D. Salinger (1919-2010)



No recent photos available

Salinger's life

- His family
- WWII (enlists April 1942)
- Sylvia
- His writings
- His love life and his reclusion